

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 /015 R

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DRAFTED BY: EB:NPAZDRAL:MW

APPROVED BY: EB:NPAZDRAL

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

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FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY ENDERS

FOLLOWING REPEAT MEXICO 3140 ACTION SECSTATE INFO LONDON
NASSAU 11 APR

QUOTE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, EAGR, MX, XM

SUBJECT: SUGAR: MEXICAN VIEWS ON PUERTO PLATA AGENDA

DEPT PLEASE PASS ALL ARA DIPLOMATIC POSTS

REFS: A) SANTO DOMINGO 1580; B) MEXICO 3106;
C) STATE 061168

1. SUMMARY: MEXICAN OFFICIAL CONFIRMED APRIL 11 THAT
GOM DOES NOT FAVOR SUGAR PRICE MAINTENANCE SCHEMES,
CONSIDERING THEM UNWORKABLE. STATED PRICE MAINTENANCE
NOT ON PUERTO PLATA AGENDA, AND THAT PROPOSALS NOT
FAVORED BY MAJORITY LA PRODUCERS. OUTLINED TENTATIVE
AGENDA, AND REITERATED THAT MEETING WAS TO EXCHANGE
INFORMATION AND IDEAS, AND DEFINITELY NOT INTENDED TO
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BE "CONFRONTATIONAL" WITH U.S. OR OTHER CONSUMERS.
END SUMMARY.

2. EMBECONOFF CALLED TODAY ON OFFICIAL MEXICAN SUGAR

PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION (UNPASA) TO DISCUSS MEXICAN VIEWS ON PUERTO PLATA AGENDA WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS PRESS REPORTS REF B AND PRICE MAINTENANCE QUESTIONS REFS A AND C.

3. OFFICIAL (PEDRO ESPINOSA, EXPORT MANAGER UNPASA) CONFIRMED UNEQUIVACALLY THAT MEXICO DOES NOT SUPPORT ANY PLAN FOR SUGAR PRICE MAINTENANCE BY PRODUCERS, DESCRIBING ANY SUCH IDEA AS UNWORKABLE, ONE WHICH WOULD NOT ENJOY WIDE SUPPORT AMONG LA PRODUCERS. ALTHOUGH SOME "POLITICIANS" AT PUERTO PLATA MAY RAISE ISSUE FOR PRESS CONSUMPTION, ESPINOSA STATED THAT PRICE MAINTENANCE WAS NOT EVEN ON AGENDA. IF PROPOSAL IS DISCUSSED, MEXICO WILL NOT SUPPORT IT, HE ADDED.

4. WHEN ASKED BY EMBOFF FOR AGENDA SPECIFICS, ESPINOSA SAID THAT CREATING "PERFECT KNOWLEDGE" MARKET CONDITIONS AMONG LA PRODUCERS WAS PRIMARY GOAL, IN VIEW FACT THAT MANY SMALLER LA PRODUCERS SOMETIMES MAKE UNFAVORABLE DEALS DUE TO LACK OF KNOWLEDGE DAY-TO-DAY MARKET CONDITIONS. ANOTHER AGENDA ITEM WILL CONCERN FREE EXCHANGE OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN SUGAR CANE INDUSTRY, AS IT IS FELT THERE IS MUCH OVERLAP IN CURRENT NATIONAL RESEARCH EFFORTS TO IMPROVE YIELDS. THUS, ESPINOSA CONCLUDED, MAIN PURPOSE OF PUERTO PLATA MEETING COULD BEST BE SUMMED UP AS AN ATTEMPT AT BETTER COMMUNICATIONS.

5. ON PRICE QUESTION, ESPINOSA (WHO DOES NOT MAKE ALVAREZ CLAIM OF OMNISCIENCE) NOTES THAT MAJOR REFINERS HAVE BEEN COMING INTO MARKET OVER PAST THREE WEEKS AT TWENTY-FIVE CENT PER POUND LEVEL, AND MEXICAN PRICE ANALYSIS SUGGESTS THAT EQUILIBRIUM LEVEL OVER NEXT WEEKS, AND PERHAPS MONTHS, WILL FLUCTUATE SLIGHTLY AROUND TWENTY TO TWENTY-FIVE CENTS.

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6. MEXICAN SUGAR POLICY, ESPINOSA SAID, IS CONGRUENT WITH MEXICAN COFFEE POLICY, AND HE CITED RECENT VISIT OF FAUSTO CANTU PENA, HEAD OF MEXICAN COFFEE INSTITUTE TO DISCUSS AREAS OF COOPERATION WITH SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS IN WASHINGTON LAST WEEK. (COMMENT: EMBASSY IS INTERESTED IN RECEIVING FURTHER INFORMATION THESE TALKS.) MEXICO DOES NOT SEEK CONFRONTATION WITH THE U.S., EUROPE, JAPAN, OR ANY OTHER DEVELOPED COUNTRIES ON SUGAR QUESTION, HE REITERATED, BUT DOES FEEL STRONGLY THAT DEVELOPED COUNTRIES (WHO ARE PRINCIPAL PURCHASERS) HAVE OBLIGATION TO NEGOTIATE IN GOOD FAITH QUESTION REASON-

ABLE PRICE STABILITY, ESPECIALLY IF IN FUTURE SUGAR
PRICES FALL PRECIPITOUSLY.

7. COMMENT: (A) BASED ON ABOVE, WE BELIEVE THAT
ALVAREZ PROBABLY MIS-INTERPRETED CANO'S CONVERSATIONS
WITH HIM ON QUESTION GOM SUPPORT FOR UNILATERAL
PRICE MAINTENANCE SCHEME. ALL EVIDENCE AVAILABLE
TO US (INCLUDING RECENT AGATT DISCUSSIONS AT
TECHNICAL LEVEL UNPASA AND APRIL 11 CONVERSATION
REPORTED ABOVE) SUGGESTS THAT MEXICO DOES NOT
SUPPORT INCLUSION PRICE MAINTENANCE QUESTION IN
PUERTO PLATA AGENDA. MEXICANS ARE PUT OFF BY SCHEME
IN PART BECAUSE OF QUESTION STOCKPILE FINANCING
(WHO PAYS?), TRIGGER MECANISM FOR STOCKPILE RELEASE,
AND OTHER TECHNICAL PROBLEMS. (B) HOWEVER, MEXICO
DOES SUPPORT PRICE STABILITY CONCEPT ON NON-CONFRONTA-
TIONAL BASIS, INCLUDING OPENING OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH
CONSUMING COUNTRIES WITH VIEW TO MUTUALLY-SATISFACTORY
INTERNATIONAL SUGAR AGREEMENT.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 26 AUG 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SUGAR, PRODUCTION, POLICIES, MEETINGS, PRICES, PUERTO PLATA
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 APR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MorefiRH
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE085143
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: EB:NPZDRAL:MW
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Film Number: D750130-0694
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t197504102/baaaagyx.tel
Line Count: 131
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN EB
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MorefiRH
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <15 MAY 2003 by izenbei0>; APPROVED <15 MAY 2003 by MorefiRH>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: n/a
TAGS: ETRD, EAGR, MX, XM
To: PARIS
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006